



# Environmental Investigation McFarland, California

## EPA to Investigate Current Environmental Conditions in McFarland, California

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will evaluate the current environmental conditions in McFarland, California, in response to a community request for assistance. Residents of McFarland have raised concerns about health problems in their community. EPA will expand on previous investigations by the California Department of Health Services and the Kern County Health Department by conducting drinking water, soil and air sampling. We will need your help and involvement with the investigations.

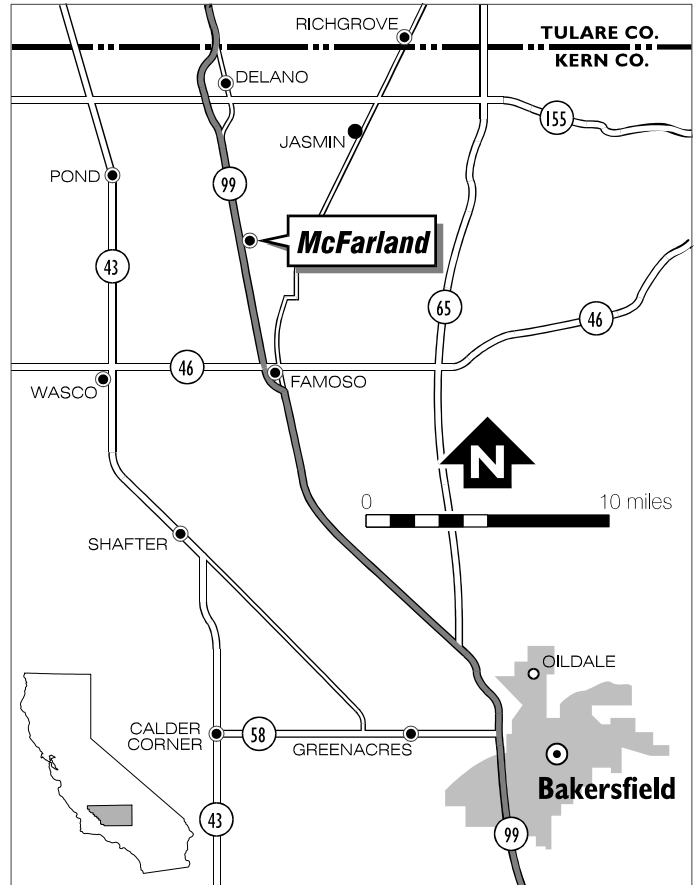
### ***EPA OPEN HOUSE***

The U.S. EPA invites you to attend  
an open house between 3 and 8 pm,  
Thursday, August 29  
to discuss EPA's activities and  
to hear your concerns.

The Open House will be held in the  
McFarland Community Center  
107 Sherwood Avenue, McFarland.

You can also call our toll-free number  
1-800-231-3075

EPA is committed to actively involving the McFarland community throughout the entire process. This fact sheet is the first in a series of community involvement activities. It includes a brief history of the community's concerns, information on future activities and how you can become involved.



### **Background**

McFarland is located in Kern County, 22 miles north of Bakersfield in California's Central Valley. From 1984 through 1991, the Kern County Health Department and the California Department of Health Services conducted a series of studies in response to a childhood cancer cluster. The studies included epidemiological and health investigations, but were unable to determine the cause of the childhood cancers.

Recently, residents of McFarland petitioned EPA for assistance in evaluating the community's potential environmental problems. The petition lists the community's concerns about exposure to pesticides and hazardous waste, potentially contaminated drinking water and continued cases of cancer and other health concerns.

## EPA to Investigate

To be responsive to community concerns and to ensure that human health and the environment are protected, EPA will assess and measure current environmental conditions in McFarland soil, water and air.

The EPA investigation will be in two phases. The first phase will begin with a search for industrial facilities in the McFarland area that may have used or disposed of hazardous chemicals. It will also include sampling of public drinking water supplies, home taps and soils. EPA will investigate soils to address citizens' concerns that their homes may have been built on contaminated materials. EPA will repeat some of the environmental sampling previously conducted, such as the drinking water sampling, but will test for some additional compounds that were not tested for previously. The second phase will include monitoring of air quality.

The McFarland community has experienced childhood cancers and other health problems for a long time. Since 1990 alone, seven new cases of cancer have been reported. Although EPA will not be able to reconstruct the past to find the cause of the cancers, the results of our studies will be shared with health agencies.

The U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) will work closely with EPA and the State throughout the investigation.

## EPA's Community Involvement Program

Community participation and involvement will be very important to the investigations. EPA is committed to involving the community throughout the entire process and will conduct community interviews in late summer 1996 to aid in the development of a community involvement plan.

If you are interested in participating in the development of the community involvement plan, please provide your phone number on the mailing list coupon below, or call EPA's toll-free number, 1-800-231-3075. If you have information you believe may be relevant to this effort but wish to remain anonymous, we will assure confidentiality at your request when you call the toll-free number.

EPA representatives will be at the McFarland Community Center on August 29 between 3 pm and 8 pm to give you an opportunity to learn about EPA's planned activities, express your concerns and offer suggestions. As the investigation progresses, EPA will continue to keep the community informed by issuing additional fact sheets, publishing notices in local newspapers, conducting meetings and placing information in the local library.

If you or someone you know would like to be added to the mailing list, please complete the mailing list coupon below and return it to EPA.

### McFarland Mailing List Coupon

To help us maintain an accurate mailing list, please mark the appropriate box below and complete the coupon. You may also call TOLL FREE, (800) 231-3075 to provide us with the information.

- ☐ I would like to remain on the mailing list.
- ☐ There is a change in my address.
- ☐ I would like to be removed from the mailing list.
- ☐ I am interested in participating in developing the community involvement plan;  
my phone number is: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

*Return coupon to:* Angeles Herrera, Community Involvement Coordinator  
U.S. EPA, 75 Hawthorne Street (H-1-1), San Francisco, CA 94105.

*If you wish to remain anonymous, please let us know, and all information will remain confidential.*

## **HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED**

**ATTEND UPCOMING OPEN HOUSE:** EPA will host an open house in McFarland to give you an opportunity learn about EPA's planned activities and to express your concerns and suggestions. The open house will be held on Thursday, August 29, between 3 pm and 8 pm at the McFarland Community Center, 107 Sherwood Avenue, McFarland. Please attend — we want to hear from you.

**LET US KNOW YOUR CONCERNS:** Community involvement is an important part of this process. We want your input so our investigations will address your concerns. Please contact any of the following EPA representatives:

Angeles Herrera, Community  
Involvement Coordinator  
(415) 744-2183

Paula Bruin,  
Office of Public Affairs  
(415) 744-1587

Elizabeth Adams,  
Project Manager  
(415) 744-2235

We have a toll-free number that makes it easier for you to contact us. The toll-free number is: **1-800-231-3075**. Please call and leave a message for Angeles. She will return your call. If you wish to remain anonymous, please let us know, and all information will remain confidential.

**STAY INFORMED:** Information repositories have been established in the McFarland area to assist you in reviewing relevant documents. The repositories will be updated on a regular basis. Information about EPA's investigation is available at:

McFarland Public Library  
500 Kern Avenue  
McFarland, CA 93250  
(805) 792-2318

Hours are: Monday - Thursday from 10 am - 6 pm and Saturday from 10 am to 2 pm.  
The McFarland Public Library is closed Fridays and Sundays.

Beale Memorial Library  
Local History Room  
701 Truxton Avenue  
Bakersfield, CA 93301  
(805) 861-2136

Hours are: Monday - Friday from 12 pm to 6 pm,  
and Saturday from 10 am to 12 pm and from 3 pm to 6 pm.  
The Beale Memorial Library is closed on Sundays.

**PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS:** EPA's community involvement staff will begin scheduling community interviews in McFarland soon. We encourage residents, community and business groups, government officials and other interested parties to participate in this community involvement effort. The purpose of the interviews will be to identify community concerns and develop a plan for keeping the community well-informed throughout the investigations. The information provided by the community during the interviews will remain confidential.

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U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX  
75 Hawthorne Street (H-1-1)  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
Attn: Angeles Herrera

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Inside: Information on EPA's investigation plans for McFarland, CA.

Adentro: Información acerca de los planes de la EPA para investigar McFarland, CA.